

SENATE BILL 5

By Stevens

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 8, Chapter 14; Title 8, Chapter 7; Title 16; Title 17; Title 18, Chapter 4 and Title 18, Chapter 5, relative to judicial districts.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 16-2-501, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and substituting instead the following:

(a)

(1) The general assembly finds that because of recent population shifts in this state, it is paramount that the judicial districts be periodically realigned to correspond to the new population centers in the state. Each citizen deserves equal access to justice and this can only be accomplished by ensuring that the limited resource of trial courts be utilized in the most efficient and effective way possible.

(2) To accomplish this purpose, it is necessary to reorganize the existing trial court system of this state. It does not have as its purpose the abolition of any judicial district.

(3) Nothing in this part shall be construed as altering, diminishing, or abolishing chancery court or the constitutional and historical distinctions between chancery court and circuit court.

(b) At least two (2) years prior to the August general election for trial judges occurring in August 2022, and every eight (8) years thereafter, the population, caseload, and number of judges shall be assessed for each judicial district by the administrative office of the courts. By December 1 of the year in which the assessment is made, the

administrative office of the courts shall report its findings on the need for judicial realignment and any suggested changes to judicial districts to the senate judiciary committee and the house of representatives civil justice committee.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.